

TUCK HAMPER RESULT INSIDE!

The GREYFRIARS 1^D
HERALD. 2

No. 6. Vol. 1.
 Week Ending
 Dec. 25th, 1915.

Edited by Harry Wharfen & Co of Sturdy 1. Greyfriars School.

CAN YOU READ THIS PICTURE-STORY OF DICK WHITTINGTON?
 OUR POPULAR ONE-WEEK COMPETITION FOR BOYS AND GIRLS!

DICK WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT
 WENT TO PARIS TO SEEK EMPLOYMENT
 AND TO SELL HIS CATS
 AND TO BUY A SHIP
 AND TO SELL HIS CATS
 AND TO BUY A SHIP
 AND TO SELL HIS CATS
 AND TO BUY A SHIP

TUCK HAMPERS AS PRIZES.

(Full Particulars will be found on Page 9.)



Readers of
THE GREYFRIARS HERALD, $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

who are not already acquainted with the famous schoolboys who edit this new weekly paper should note that The MAGNET Library, published Every Monday, price One Penny, contains a Magnificent Long Complete School Story dealing with the Adventures of the Chums of Greyfriar School.

To-day's issue of The MAGNET Library contains

THE BOUNDER'S RELAPSE!
By FRANK RICHARDS.



EDITORIAL.



FRANK NUGENT,
Art Editor.



H. VERNON-SMITH,
Sports Editor.



HARRY WHARTON,
Editor.



ROBERT CHERRY,
Fighting Editor.



MARK LINLEY,
Sub-Editor.

OUR STAFF.

MERRY CHRISTMAS, EVERYBODY!

This issue of the GREYFRIARS HERALD will be published just before Christmas, and I take this opportunity of wishing all my chums, far and near, from the frozen Pole to India's coral strand, a very jolly Christmas, with plenty of good cheer and all the best of everything!

EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY!

Johnny Bull says we are at war with Germany. I believe I have heard something of the sort before. But if Johnny imagines there are going to be long faces and gloomy utterances on that account, then he is jolly well mistaken. What in the world is the use of moping? Our soldiers and sailors will do the trick in time! There's no sense in repining. The Hun must get it where the chicken got the chopper! It is sheer folly to grumble at the inevitable; so, as for the war—well, blow the war! Let Yuletide fun and Yuletide frolic be the order of the day; and let us kill the fatted turkey, and enjoy ourselves right merrily, in the hope that Christmas, 1916, will find "peace on earth" an accomplished fact!

OUR CHRISTMAS EVE NUMBER.

Our next issue of the GREYFRIARS HERALD should sell even better than its predecessors, for it appears on Christmas Eve, and a delightful Yuletide flavour runs throughout. The Herlock Sholmes story is funnier than

ever; "The Pride of the Ring" advances in interest and excitement; and there will be a grand, long, complete story of our little selves. No finer companion for the Christmas fireside could possibly be found, and my chums should order their next number NOW!

THE GLORIOUS FUTURE.

For my part, I have endeavoured, with the whole-hearted co-operation of numerous assistants, to produce a number well worthy of a place by the Christmas fireside. I often picture to myself the conversations which will take place all over the world in connection with Herlock Sholmes, Neddy Welsh, Bubble and Squeak, and the rest of our gallery of characters. Don't forget to tell me which features take your fancy, and which—if any—you would like to see discontinued. I shall then be in a position to provide you with a bill of fare bearing the hall-mark of perfection.

Our circulation continues to grow, and there are great things in store for my chums. Once again, then, I wish you all a very happy Christmas, and trust that many a toast will be honoured, in foaming ginger-pop, to the GREYFRIARS HERALD—the only paper on the market edited by schoolboys, and containing twenty pages for one halfpenny!—Yours very sincerely,

HARRY WHARTON.

READ OUR ALPHABETICAL FOOTLINES 

THE PRIDE OF THE RING!

The First Chapters of a Magnificent New Serial Story dealing with the Noble Art of Self-defence, and Specially Written for the "Greyfriars Herald"

:: By ::

MARK LINLEY.

Dr. Mundy made a spring at the ropes, and drew himself up. At the same instant there was a terrible rending sound, which proclaimed that the tails of his frock coat had been torn bodily away. (See picture.)



WHAT CAME BEFORE.

NEDDY WELSH and "DOLLY" GRAY run away by night from Earlingham School, owing to an injustice done to the former. Being skilled boxers, they hope to secure situations in a booth, but fail dismally, and fall on troublous times in London. Bob Sullivan, Neddy's old instructor, rescues the boys from their sorry plight, and arranges for Neddy Welsh to encounter Billy Weston, a fly-weight champion, at the Ring. Should Neddy show up well, Sam Burke, a boxing-booth proprietor, offers to give him a permanent engagement. The lad rises to the occasion in splendid style, but just as he has gained the upper hand of Weston there is a sudden commotion in the building, and the headmaster of Earlingham makes his presence known, exclaiming:

"Stop! Stop this fight instantly!"
(Now Read On.)

Freedom or Slavery?

EXCITEMENT of the wildest kind prevailed in the crowded building. The spectators were on their feet, shouting to the intruder to retire. Such a dramatic interruption was almost without parallel in the history of the Ring.

But Dr. Mundy, the stern, austere principal of Earlingham, had no intention of retiring just

then. Here, before his very eyes, was the reckless junior who had given him the slip. And Gray, too, was sure to be in the vicinity. The Head licked his lips with an unholy relish.

"Let this combat cease!" he exclaimed.

Neddy Welsh had instinctively dropped his guard, and Billy Weston, who had had nearly all the stuffing knocked out of him by Neddy's last blow, lay back on the ropes, gasping for breath, and eyeing Dr. Mundy in amazement.

Many hands were thrust out to check the Head's progress as he pushed his way towards the ring, but, although he was by no manner of means an athletic individual, Dr. Mundy made a spring at the ropes and drew himself up. At the same instant there was a terrible rending sound, which proclaimed that the tails of his frock-coat had been torn bodily away from the rest of the garment by the grasping hands in the rear.

Bob Sullivan seemed to be the only man who kept his head. He strode forward, and confronted the enraged headmaster with a somewhat grim expression.

"Better stand back, sir," he said quietly. "You're asking for trouble, interfering with a boxing contest in this way. As it is, I don't quite see how you're going to escape the wrath of the public. I'll try and arrange for you to be smuggled out quietly, but I can't guarantee your safety."

A's for the AUTHOR of this ripping rhyme,
Which deals with the revels at Christmas-time.

"Fellow," roared Dr. Mundy, "I want none of your insolence! No hooligan hands shall be laid on me, sir! Don't you know who I am?"

"I know you're a thundering idiot," to cause a scene like this!" retorted Bob, fast losing his temper. "If you wanted this lad"—he indicated Neddy Welsh—"surely you could have waited till afterwards?"

"When you would doubtless have concealed him behind the scenes!" said the Head, with heavy sarcasm. "I am not a man to be trifled with, as you will soon learn! Give that boy into my custody at once, or I will have you arrested on a charge of aiding and abetting his escape from Earlingham!"

Bob Sullivan clenched his hands hard. The headmaster of Earlingham little knew how near he was at that moment to having his somewhat prominent nose put out of shape.

"Turn him out!" came in an angry roar from the audience. "Pitch him out on his neck, and get on with the fight!"

Dr. Mundy turned pale as he noted the threatening looks which were bestowed upon him on every side. He turned again to Bob Sullivan.

"I should advise you to let Welsh come with me," he said. "He has deliberately absented himself from his school, together with another boy, and I am answerable for them to their guardians. If the matter is taken into court you will find that I have the law on my side!"

Bob Sullivan looked genuinely worried. It was a sin and a shame that such a fine fight should be spoilt in this flagrant manner; but the Head was, strictly speaking, in the right.

"What shall I do, Neddy?" whispered Bob. "I'd better go, I think," was the reply. "I don't want my name dragged through the papers. My aunt would have a fit."

Bob turned to Dr. Mundy.

"Very well," he said; "Welsh shall go with you. As this was a most interesting and important contest, however, I shall be glad if you will let the youngsters go ahead. It will soon be over."

"I refuse to be a party to anything of the kind!" snapped the Head. "Bloodshed is repellant to me! Fighting I abhor, sir! Welsh, summon your foolhardy companion at once, if he is in the building, and return with me to the school you quitted under such shady circumstances!"

Neddy Welsh gave a groan, and beckoned to Dolly Gray, who had been standing close at hand.

"It's all up, old man!" he murmured. "We've got to go! It's a question of the police being called in if we kick!"

Gray nodded, and Neddy Welsh, the clamorous uproar of the crowd having broken out afresh, leaned over the ropes and addressed them.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "I'm sorry to rob you of your entertainment, but circumstances over which I have no control have called me away. The contest is to be declared void, but I hope before long to renew my acquaintance with Billy Weston."

"Hooray!"

The audience, considerably mollified by Neddy's frank explanation, simmered down, and Dr. Mundy, with the two renegades at his heels, was enabled to leave the building.

As they passed through the exit Sam Burko approached, and whispered in Neddy's ear.

"You need never want an engagement," he said. "On to-night's form you've proved yourself to be a regular corker! Hope you get out of this fix all right!"

"Thanks!" muttered Neddy.

And then he passed out into the street, out of liberty into bondage, and his thoughts, as he tramped along by Dr. Mundy's side, were black and bitter.

The Runaways' Return.

THE headmaster of Earlingham conversed with his captives in triumphant tones as the train whirled the trio back to the school. And the Head could well afford to be triumphant. Single-handed, he had tracked down the fugitives, and punishment of the severest nature was in store for them.

The juniors well knew that they were in the man's power. If they endeavoured to bowl him over and break away there would be a scene, and the details of their escapade would become public property. That was a contingency to be avoided at all hazards.

"You are doubtless wondering," said Dr. Mundy, rubbing his hands, "how I managed to bring you to book?"

Neddy and his chum were silent.

"It was very brief," pursued the Head, "and very simple. It did not need the deductive powers of a Sherlock Holmes. I happened, by great good fortune, to be in London to-day to attend the monthly meeting of governors, and was astonished, Welsh, to see your name amply displayed on the hoardings. I should not have troubled to investigate, had I not recalled your bout with Barker on first coming to Earlingham, which showed that, hooligan-like, you were able to use your fists. I thereupon determined to pay a visit to the Ring, and arrived when your bestial exhibition was at its height. That prize-fighting fellow had no alternative but to hand you over."

Neddy Welsh scowled. He resented any insult directed against Bob Sullivan, but was feeling too sick and too harassed to say anything at that moment.

Mr. Cuttle, the master of the Fourth, was waiting on the platform with two prefects when the train drew up at the little station for Earlingham. The Head had wired his subordinates from London that he had caught the runaways.

The little party of six made its way up to the school like a funeral procession. Indeed, had anyone played the "Dead March" in "Saul" at that juncture it would have been most appropriate.

B's for the BANQUET, so sumptuous and rare;
But it wouldn't last long if friend Bunter was there!

Tremendous excitement prevailed in the ranks of the Fourth when it became known that Welsh and Gray, who had been absent for so many weeks, were being brought back under an escort, so to speak. All the fellows bore painful recollections of that memorable evening when the two chums stood shoulder to shoulder and fought their way to freedom. Black eyes and swollen noses had been liberally distributed, and the Fourth hailed the return of the run-aways with unconcealed delight, for they would now be given an opportunity of getting some of their own back.

"Beastly cads!" sniffed Barker. "They've been loafing about London selling matches, to judge by their personal appearance. I expect the Head will make it warm for 'em, and so will we afterwards."

"Yes, rather!"

Late though the hour was, a general assembly was called in Big Hall, and the birch and block, with which were associated so many time-honoured traditions, occupied a position on the raised dais.

A few moments later Dr. Mundy rustled in, his eyes positively gloating with pleasure at the thought that he was about to administer two hefty, consecutive floggings. The boys, too—snobs, cads, and rank outsiders as they were—awaited proceedings with the greatest relish.

The Head then addressed the great throng. His statements were brief and to the point.

"Boys," he exclaimed, "you see here two young ruffians who absconded from the school on no pretext whatever. It is usual, I believe, to visit such an unmitigated offence with expulsion. In this case I have decided to be lenient, and each of the culprits shall merely receive a sound birching!"

Several of the fags shivered, for they knew Dr. Mundy's sound birchings of old. They usually rendered the poor victim in such a state that he was unable to sit down for days together.

The Head then summoned the captain of the school, and signed to him to take Neddy Welsh upon his shoulders. Neddy was inclined to be rebellious at first, but when he realised the hopelessness of it all, he calmly did as he was bid. Then the Head pushed back the folds of his gown, preparatory to dealing out the first stroke.

Suddenly, while the school gazed at the scene with eyes transfixed, the door of Big Hall was thrown open, and a couple of men dashed in. One was Bob Sullivan; the other a young, pleasant-looking individual whom no one at Earlingham had ever seen before.

"A close call!" murmured Bob Sullivan to his companion. "It looks as though we're just in the nick of time!"

(Next Monday's instalment of this great boxing serial will be extra long and particularly exciting. Order your copy of the GREYFRIARS HERALD in advance, and don't forget to introduce this splendid story of Mark Linley's to all your chums.)

A Yuletide Greeting

By HARRY WHARTON.

HERALD readers, one and all,
While the merry snowflakes fall,
Hear the Greyfriars fellows call:
"Merry Christmas!"

Those who have from Number One
Gloated o'er a feast of fun
Have our warmest thanks: Well done!
Merry Christmas!

Revels, rousing and unique,
Be to those who, week by week,
Read of Bubble and of Squeak:
Merry Christmas!

To the readers, strong and steady,
Who are always keen and ready
For the fights of famous Neddy:
Merry Christmas!

Ye who glory, heart and soul,
In the "Chat" and "Shots at Goal,"
Hear our shouts like thunder roll:
Merry Christmas!

Comrades all, in every clime,
Take my wishes, through this rhyme,
For a right-down, ripping time!
Merry Christmas!

Tuck Hampers Awarded

RESULT OF OUR FIRST GREAT
: PICTURE PUZZLE CONTEST :

I am now in a position to announce the result of the first Tuck Hamper contest in the GREYFRIARS HERALD.

The correct rendering of Harry Wharton's letter is as follows:

"Dear Readers,—I hope that after reading this number you will be satisfied with the contents.

"I am certain the many features will have caused your time to pass cheerfully. If you have read this letter rightly, you will, I know, have a ripping feast from the splendid hamper of tuck which will be your prize.—Yours truly,
"HARRY WHARTON."

The following two competitors, who gave the letter correct in every detail, share the Cash Prize of £1:

BOB CRIPPS,
206, Shirland Road, Paddington, W.

ERNEST COWLE,
65, Camberwell Grove, London, S.E.

(Continued at foot of col. 2, page 19)

C's for the CHOCOLATE, so sweet to the eyes;
It goes down a treat, whether Rowntree's or Fry's!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

CELEBRITIES, NONENTITIES, AND OTHERS, AIR THEIR VIEWS ON PASSING
EVENTS AT GREYFRIARS SCHOOL.

SMOKES FOR SOLDIERS!

"To the Editor of the GREYFRIARS HERALD.

"Dear Wharton,—Please permit us, through the medium of your paper, to thank the following boys in the Remove Form for their kind donations to the Christmas Comforts Fund for Greyfriars Old Boys serving with the Colours:

"The Hon. Herbert Mauleverer, £5; H. Vernon-Smith, £1 1s.; 'The Famous Five,' £1; M. Linley, R. Penfold, T. Brown, S. Field, G. Bulstrode, R. Russell, P. Todd, and M. Newland, 2s. 6d. each; M. Desmond, D. Morgan, E. Wibley, and P. Kipps, 1s. each; H. Skinner, P. Bolsover, S. Snoop, and W. Stott, 6d. each; and W. G. Bunter, two pennies of doubtful origin.

"You will be interested to learn that the Fund will provide seventy stunning parcels of smokes for those who worked and played within our walls years ago, and we feel sure that the festive season will be considerably enhanced for them thereby.

"Again thanking you and your chums for such an admirable display of generosity,—We remain, sincerely yours,

"GEORGE WINGATE,

"ARTHUR COURTNEY,

"JAMES WALKER,

"RUPERT VALENCE.

"(Committee for the Fund.)"

[We are delighted to do our bit for the gallant fellows who, in the trench and on the plain, are so worthily upholding the high traditions of our splendid school.—ED.]

GOOD-BYE TO GREYFRIARS!

"To the Editor of the GREYFRIARS HERALD.

"Dear Wharton,—This is the last letter which I shall pen within the historic walls of Greyfriars. To-morrow, the old place will know me no more. I shall have joined the large and loyal assembly of 'old boys,' and shall, I hope, be garbed in the uniform of the Officers' Training Corps.

"I've had some jolly times here, and although I have no fears for the future, yet I feel that I should like to have stayed to see the footer season through, and to burn the midnight oil in my cosy study.

"The five years spent in this famous school will, I feel sure, prove to be five of the happiest years of my life. True, my career as a scholar has not been all honey, as evidenced by the fact

that Jones major knocked me out in that memorable encounter behind the chapel. However, I trust I have done sufficient to enable my memory to be kept green by all my colleagues, to whom I reluctantly bid a last farewell.

"Good luck to you, Wharton! You have always struck me as being a fellow of sound principles and high moral courage, and your great new venture, the GREYFRIARS HERALD, should prove a lasting success.

"And now I must buck up and pack my trunk, ready for the morning. Here's health to all my rivals and chums, and that they may shape like Trojans in future tussles on playing-field and river is the sincere wish of,—Yours very cordially,
VIVIAN DOUGLAS."

[Good-bye, Duggy, old fellow! We don't want to lose you, but, of course, you've got to go—and may the Huns get it neckfully, as Inky would say. We have watched your displays on Big Side with humble adoration. We have seen you slog "sixers" and shoot goals galore, and we think you're just the type of chap the Army wants. And when his Majesty pins the D.C.M. on your manly breast, may we be there to see!—ED.]

COMMENTS FROM THE CATERPILLAR.

"Highcliffe School,
Kent.

"To the Editor of the GREYFRIARS HERALD.

"My Dear Wharton,—Congrats on your wonderful weekly, which isn't half bad, begad! What puzzles and astounds me is the amazin' energy which you show in compilin' it. The Herlock Sholmes perpetrations are real gems, and the serial's a winner all the way, though it makes one shudder to read of Neddy Welsh constantly punchin' and divin' and duckin' in the ring. That sort of thing would make me expire on the mat.

"Pon has just looked in—our dear old friend Pon! He says the HERALD's a borin' and depressin' rag, and that he can go one better, so I should advise you to look to your laurels.

"Excuse me now, my dear fellow, while I rest my fevered brain.—Yours languidly,

"RUPERT DE COURCY."

[Thanks, Caterpillar, old man, for your tip concerning the presumptuous Pon. We'll soon settle his old hash. And now—yaw!—you must excuse me—yaw-aw!—I'm so awfully tired, dontcherknow—yaw-aw-aw!—ED.]

D—the great DANCE—brings a blush to your face,
Especially if there's a girl in the case!

THE DEATH OF SHOLMES!

Another Grand Story dealing with the Amazing Adventures of **HERLOCK SHOLMES**, Detective.

:: WRITTEN BY ::
PETER TODD.

CHAPTER ONE.

THE case of Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky—is the next on my list at this period of our residence at Shaker Street, and it is the one I propose to give here. This case, which caused the disappearance and supposed death of Herlock Sholmes, proved the most tensely exciting of all in which I shared the work of my amazing friend.

Sholmes had been absent for several days, and I was growing somewhat uneasy on his account, when one morning a coal-heaver was shown into my rooms while I was at breakfast. I rose to my feet, somewhat surprised, but at once the well-known voice reassured me.

"Good-morning, Jotson!"

"Sholmes!" I exclaimed, in astonishment.

"Himself!" he replied, sinking into the arm-chair, and resting his feet on the mantelpiece in his old familiar way that I knew so well. "Give me something to eat, my dear fellow. I have eaten nothing for fourteen days. I am famished!"

He devoured bacon and eggs ravenously. Through the grime on his face, he looked at me with his old smile.

"I see you have changed your habits, my dear Jotson."

"In what way, Sholmes?"

"You have taken to clean-shaving."

I started.

"My dear Sholmes," I protested, "you have been absent! How can you possibly be aware—"

"Deduction, my good fellow," said Sholmes carelessly. "When I left you, you were wearing a moustache. At the present moment there is no trace of hair on your upper lip. To the trained eye of a detective, Jotson, the inference is clear. You have shaved clean!"

"I see that you have not changed, at all



Hardly had we reached the garden, when a terrific explosion shook the building to its foundations. "A bomb!" said Sholmes. "The work of Professor Hickorychicory!"

events, Sholmes," I replied. "The same amazing insight—the same irresistible power of deduction—"

"You flatter me, Jotson. At the present moment," he said moodily, "my insight is at fault. I have met my match at last, Jotson."

"Impossible!"

"It is true. Have you ever heard of Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky?"

I shook my head.

"Naturally," said Sholmes. "Few have heard of him. The police know nothing of him. Even the fact that his name is spelt Hickorychicory, and pronounced Hickychicky, has failed to put them on the track. Yet he is the most dangerous criminal in London—or in the world. Every crime that has been committed during the past seventy years has been planned by this man. His hand is everywhere—invisible, but powerful. It was he who stole the Crown Jewels of Spoofia; he who robbed the Princess of Ghammon; he, my dear Jotson, who kidnapped the young Duke of Shepherd's Bush, and assassinated the Marquis of Hornsey Rise; he who made away with the Depaste diamonds; he who administered the permanent sleeping-draught to Sir Tedward Bray; he who abstracted the Prime Minister's spectacles at a critical moment, and caused him to remain in ignorance of the existence of Vulgaria on the map at a very critical hour in European history!"

"Good heavens, Sholmes!"

E's for the **EAGERNESS** shown by each heart
For lessons to finish and Yuletide to start.

F's for the **FARE**, by our parents supplied
To see us right through the delightful train-ride.

"It is true, Jotson. With this unseen, invisible; indiscernible, and unspotted criminal I am now at the death-grapple!"

"My dear Sholmes!"

"Murder," said Sholmes quietly, "is nothing to him! I have had several narrow escapes. He has sworn my death! Ha, ha! Yesterday, in a fashionable restaurant, I detected a fragment of German sausage in my soup. It was a plot to poison me; he bribed the waiter. Last evening I received free tickets for the latest revue at the Giganteum Theatre; a cunning scheme to bore me to death. Last night a German band began to play under my window; I barely escaped with my life. This morning, as I came here, my taxi-cab was blown sky-high by a bomb cunningly placed in the taximeter, timed to go off when twopence had ticked away. I was blown into the air. Fortunately, I landed unharmed on top of the Monument, and descended safely by means of the steps. Jotson, you know that I have nerve, but I confess that this has shaken me."

He rose to his feet and tiptoed to the window. On the other side of the street a ragman was passing, uttering the familiar cry: "Rags and bones, bottles and jars!" Sholmes turned to me, his face blazing with excitement.

"Rum, Jotson!"

"Sholmes!" I ejaculated.

"You see that ragman? It is Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky—in disguise! Bolt!"

We rushed to the door.

Hardly had we reached the garden, when a terrific explosion shook the building to its foundations.

Sholmes looked at me, with a grim smile.

"Just in time, Jotson!"

"Sholmes!"

"A bomb!" he said. "The work of Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky. He sticks at nothing. The coils are closing round him, Jotson. Only my demise can save him." He set his teeth. "It is a struggle for life or death between Herlock Sholmes and Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky. Jotson, are you with me?"

"Hear me swear—" I began.

"Enough! Let us go!"

With a few magic touches of his hand, he disguised me as a fishmonger. Then he hurried me away.

CHAPTER TWO.

THE next few weeks were crammed with excitement.

It was the hardest case Herlock Sholmes had undertaken, and he did not conceal from me that sometimes he feared that Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky—might yet escape him. Our narrow escapes were marvellous; we grew familiar with danger. The coils were closing round the hardened criminal, but he was fighting hard. The man who had ruled the criminal world for seventy years was not to be taken easily.

Why Sholmes did not cause the arrest of the man who was so deeply dyed with crime was a mystery to me. Sholmes did not explain. It was one of the secrets that were locked up in that inscrutable breast.

It was at sunset one evening that we found ourselves pursuing a lonely track amid the rocky wastes and precipices of the wild Hill of Ludgate. Far below us flowed the dark waters of the Fleet River. Sholmes had been silent for several minutes—a most unusual circumstance. He turned to me suddenly.

"Jotson!" he said. His voice was unusually gentle, and I could not help a rush of tears to my eyes. I blew my nose. "Jotson, I feel that the end is coming—the end for him, Jotson, and the end for me!"

"Sholmes!" I murmured.

"He is here," said Sholmes. "I have tracked him down. In the narrow pass leading to the Bridge of the Black Friars he is in hiding. Jotson, my old friend, good-bye!"

"You shall not go alone!" I exclaimed.

"I must, Jotson. At the finish we must be alone—Herlock Sholmes, the detective, and Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky—the master-criminal. Fear not for me, Jotson; I am armed. I have here a railway sandwich, and with one blow——"

"But——"

"If I fail, Jotson, I leave to you all my belongings. My account in the bank, amounting at the present moment to fourpence-halfpenny, will be paid to you in a lump sum. I have instructed my bankers. The furniture at Shaker Street is yours—on the sole condition that you pay the remainder of the instalments. Only the tabby cat I should like to be given to my Aunt Sempronia. You promise me this, Jotson?"

I promised, with tears in my eyes. Could I refuse him anything at that moment?

It was in vain to seek to change his resolu-

G's for the GRAVY, so calm and serene,
Which fills to the full the ancestral tureen.

H is the HOLLY, which charms and invites
When hung on the wall in the glare of the lights.

I's for the IVY which hangs from the beam,
And helps to make Christmas a rapturous dream!

tion. The last scene of the tragedy was to be enacted between those two alone—Herlock Sholmes, my dear, amazing friend, and the dark and tortuous criminal, the spelling of whose name gave no clue to its pronunciation.

We parted, and Sholmes plunged into the dark and gloomy pass. I sat upon a rock and waited. My eyes were blinded with tears. Was I ever to see again my astonishing friend—ever again to behold those old familiar feet resting upon the mantelpiece in the old rooms at Shaker Street? I am not ashamed to say that I wept, and the lonely rocks around me echoed: "Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo! Boo-hoo!"

Suddenly there was a trampling of feet—a sound of voices. I recognised the voice of Herlock Sholmes.

"At last!"

"At last! Ha, ha!" echoed another voice,

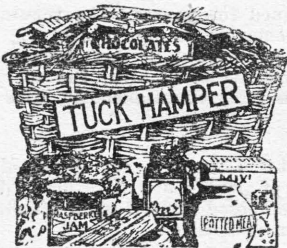
the deep and thrilling tones of Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky.

For a moment I saw them—locked in a deadly embrace, reeling upon the verge of the wildest precipice of the Hill of Ludgate. Then they disappeared from my sight—still locked in that deadly embrace as in a Chubb lock.

I stumbled away—I hardly know how. I had looked my last upon Herlock Sholmes—that marvellous man whose adventures I now present for the first time to the public (copyright in the U.S.). Far, far below, where the dark waters of the Fleet murmured beneath the frowning crags of Ludgate Hill, lay Herlock Sholmes, side by side with his deadly foe, Professor Hickorychicory—pronounced Hickychicky!

THE END.

(Another of these magnificent stories next Monday. Order early.)

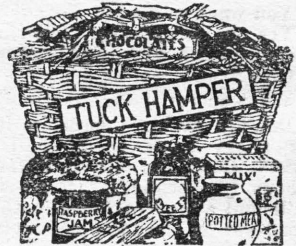


TUCK HAMPERS AS PRIZES!

Great New Competition!

First Prize £1.

SIX OTHER PRIZES OF TUCK HAMPERS.



This week I am giving the above splendid prizes, which will be awarded for the best efforts in the following simple little task. On the cover page you will find an attractive picture-puzzle, and I want you to try to make it out for yourselves. I myself wrote the original paragraph, and my artist drew up the puzzle. The original paragraph is locked up in my safe, and the first prize of £1 will be awarded to the reader whose solution is exactly the same as my "par." The other prizes, which consist of hampers crammed full of most delicious "tuck," will be awarded to the readers whose solutions are next in order of merit. If there are ties for the money prize, this will be divided, but no reader will be awarded more than one share.

Should more than six readers qualify for the tuck hamper prizes, these will be added to.

You may send as many solutions as you please, but each must be accompanied by the signed coupon you will find on this page.

Write your solutions IN INK on a clean sheet of paper, fill up coupon below, and pin this, and address to "8th TUCK HAMPER COMPETITION, 'THE GREYFRIARS HERALD,' Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.," so as to reach that address not later than Tuesday, December 23th, 1915.

Remember that my decision must be accepted in all matters concerning this competition as absolutely binding.

I enter "The Greyfriars Herald" Tuck Hamper Competition No. 6, and agree to accept the published decision as absolutely binding.

Signed

WRITE CAREFULLY

Address

TAKING THINGS EASY!



An Interview with Lord Mauleverer, of the Remove Form, by the "Greyfriars Herald" Special Representative.

his languid eyes, and gave a groan of submission.

"Very well, begad!" he murmured. "I s'pose I must humour you, or that energetic fellow, Wharton, will waylay me with a cricket-stump. But be as brief as possible, if you love me."

"I'll be as brief as a landlord giving a tenant notice to quit!" I assured my noble friend. "You have gained for yourself the reputation of being the Remove's champion slacker. You never rise with the lark, neither do you rise with that somewhat lazier bird, the sparrow. You get up, in fact, simultaneously with the Bunter-bird."

Snore!

"Great Scott!" I gasped, for Lord Mauleverer, instead of paying attentive heed to my remarks, had composed himself upon his downy couch and fallen fast asleep.

His lordship's feet were encased in moccasin slippers, and, whisking one off, I began to tickle the sole of his foot. He jolly soon came to consciousness.

"Yaroo! Some beastly fly—"

"It's all right," I chuckled. "Look here, my lord, you've got to keep wide awake. No good snoring when nearly a million readers are wanting to know what manner of person you are. As I was saying, your life seems to be devoid of anything in the way of effort. You get up with Bunter; your prep is always done overnight by any charitably-disposed fag who happens to come along; you never play footer; you never run, skate, shoot, swim, row, or box; and I've never even caught you playing chess or beggar-my-neighbour!"

"Too much fag, dear boy! You think I could hold a pack of beastly cards in my hand for half an hour at a

(Continued on page 12.)

"YAW-AW-AW!"

His lordship, stretched out languidly on his costly divan, yawned portentously at my approach.

"You want to see me, begad?" he murmured.

"Yes, rather, Mauly! It's time you gave us a helping hand with the HERALD, you know."

"Groo!"

"What on earth's the matter?"

"Don't!" said his lordship feebly. "Don't talk about work, or I shall expire on the carpet! Can't the silly old HERALD jog along without me, begad? If the funds are low, you'll find a wad of fivers in the fire-grate, or spread out on the table as serviettes. I forget what I did with 'em exactly."

"Funds!" I repeated.

"Why, you burbling chump, how can a paper require funds, when it's supported by every Magnetite, Gemite, Popite, Friendite, and all the other 'ites? I want you to jaw to me for about ten minutes."

"Mercy!"

"I desire your views on taking things easy," I went on. "You see, you are regarded as the slackiest slacker who ever slacked. Can you give me a reason for this?"

"Too much fag," drawled my host.

"Oh, I see! You mean excessive cigarette-smoking—what?"

"Nothin' of the sort. Oh, do go away, there's a good fellow! You make me ill!"

"But the HERALD!" I shrieked. "I've got to have an interview with you, whether you like it or not! We promised our readers last week."

His lordship slowly opened

OUR WEEKLY CARTOON.

By JOHNNY BULL.

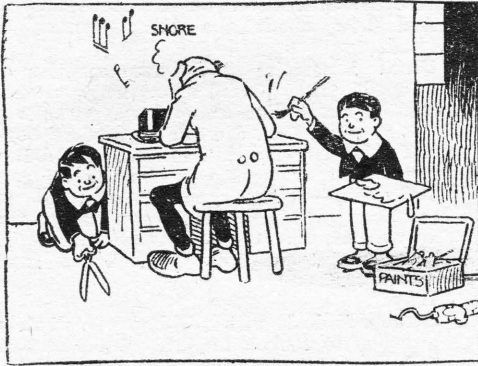


No. 6.—ROBERT CHERRY,
Our Fighting Editor.

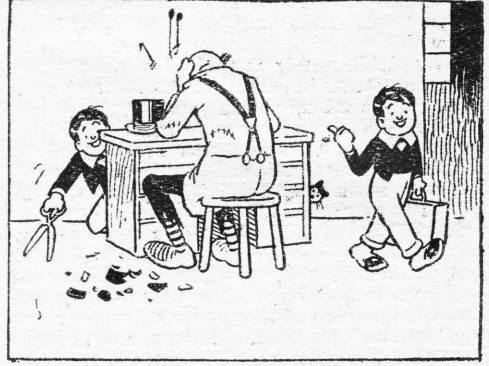
All Contributions from Readers Will Receive Prompt Consideration and Good Pay.

THE ROLICKING REVELS OF BUBBLE AND SQUEAK, THE TERRIBLE TWINS.

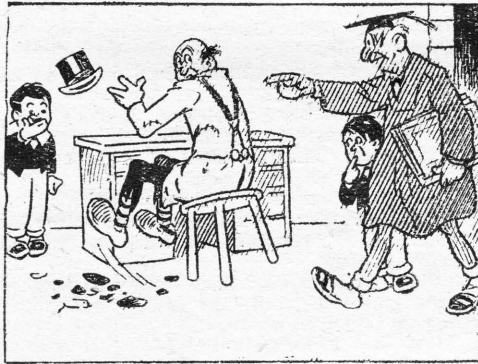
Drawn by FRANK NUGENT.



(1) The porter snored within his lodge,
And Squeak and Bubble formed a dodge.
"Oh, scissors!" Squeak was heard to say,
"I'll clip his giddy trucks away!"



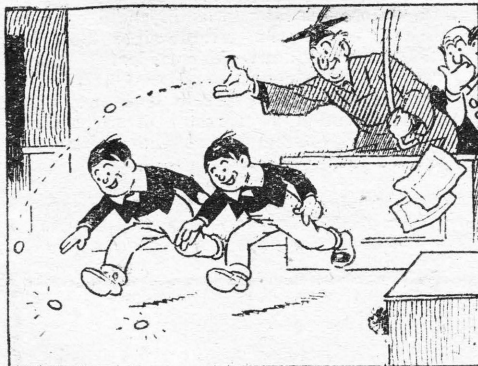
(2) The mirthful Bubble, paint in hand,
Behind the sleeper took his stand.
"I'll paint some braces on," he said,
"And won't he cop it from the Head!"



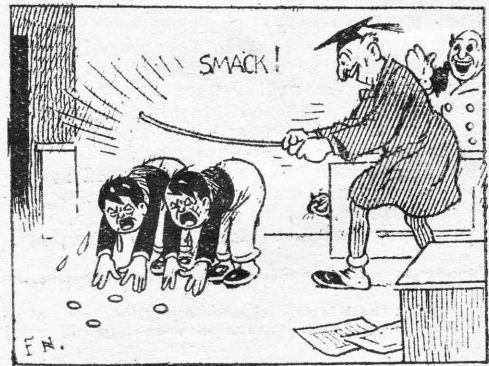
(3) The Head swept in with rustling gown,
His face contorted in a frown.
"Rise, reprobate!" he then dictated,
"I fear you are intoxicated!"



(4) The porter swung round angrily.
"I never drinks a drop!" said he.
"This is the work of them there twins,
So make 'em sorry for their sins!"



(5) The crafty Head then smiled a smile.
"I'll do this thing," he said, "in style.
Now, boys, I'm sure you'd like some cash,
So pick these coins up at the dash!"



(6) "Pile in!" roared Squeak; and as they flew
The Head thought *he* would pile in, too.
Cried he: "I've caught you bending now!"
Then rose the chorus: "Yow-ow-ow!"

Do Not Miss the Rollicking Revels of Bubble and Squeak Next Monday,

stretch?—I should die of heart-failure, don'tcher-know!"

"But surely there must be some reason for your strange behaviour? How is it you have reduced slacking to a fine art, when other fellows work like niggers and play like Trojans?"

His lordship nearly sagged off to sleep again at my question, but I dived for his feet once more, and he sat up with a jerk.

"Eh? What was it we were speakin' about?" he inquired. "I never was much good at followin' up conversations, begad! Oh, I know! You were askin' why I didn't play games."

"That's so, my lord."

"Well," drawled Mauly, "once upon a time that fearfully energetic cove Bob Cherry insisted on my takin' to violent exercise, such as dominoes and ludo. He said that games were the finest inventions under the sun—better than anythin' Sir Hiram Maxim has brought forward for windin' up the war. I resolved, therefore, to put his theory to the test."

"And what happened?" I queried.

His lordship smiled ruefully.

"First of all," he said, "I tried footer. Never shall I forget that nerve-rackin' experience! Bob Cherry said it was to be a scratch game, so when the whistle went I flew at an opponent and clawed his chivvy. He didn't like it—neither did the umperee, or whatever you call him."

"You—you mean referee?" I gasped.

"Yaas, that's it. Well, the respire kicked up a frightful shindy, and the fellow I clawed had to go an' bathe his face. Then the game proceeded in grim earnest, an' in another minute I was stretched prostrate in the mud, begad! Everybody wiped their boots on me, as if I were a common or garden doormat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cacklin' at?" demanded Lord Mauleverer suspiciously.

"Nun-nun-nothing! Pray proceed!"

"Well, at half-time, they thought I had a cold, or something, for they gave me a lemon to suck. Wharton said my play was remarkable. I blushed with pleasure, and, feelin' rather tired, thought I'd sort of rest on my laurels, an' do no work in the second half. Then suddenly a voice cried, 'Shoot, you slacker!' and the next instant a disgustin' muddy football cannoned into my ear, bowlin' me off my seat—a nice grassy mound where I had nodded off to sleep—into a puddle! The other fellows swarmed round, and asked me if I was aware that I had lost a big match.

"I replied that I was a non-smoker, and didn't carry matches. Somehow or other, my

remark maddened them, for they rolled me over an' over in the puddle, until I was in such a shoekin' state that my own grandparent wouldn't have known me! After that, I resolved to chuck footer, an' kept my word."

"And how about the other sports?" I ventured.

"Groo! I perspire at the very mention of 'em, begad! They played me as longstop once at cricket, but I didn't stop long. That's a pun, if your intellect can rise to it, dear boy! Then I tried rifle-shootin', but found I didn't have sufficient strength to press the trigger. As for rowin'—ugh! I couldn't even lift an oar off the ground, let alone keep hittin' the water with it, like those 'Varsity fellows do. And my moral principles prevent me from playin' chess."

"Why?"

"Because it deals with a bishop who went to a pawnshop to rook a knight. That sort of thing's dishonourable."

"Silly ass!" I exclaimed.

But his lordship neither heard nor heeded. He had buried his head in the cushions once more, and was sleeping the sleep of the unjust.

Just then Bob Cherry came in, with his elephant stride.

"Mauly, you slacker!" he roared, in his dulcet tones. "Wake up!"

Mauly didn't stir, until one of Bob's boots came with a terrific concussion on his aristocratic person. Then he rolled off the couch with a yell.

"Yow-ow-ow-ow! Gerraway, fathead!"

But Bob Cherry was adamant. He seized his lordship by the scruff of the neck and yanked him to the door.

"They've put a Christmas turkey on the top of the school flagstaff," he said, "and you're going up to get it, my son!"

"But—but I can't climb! I——"

"No backing out, my pippin! You've got to go through with it. The pole's only a quarter of a mile high, if that, so it won't be more than three hours' exertion."

And, before his lazy lordship could open his mouth to reply, the irrepressible Bob had whirled him away down the corridor.

I retraced my steps to the HERALD office in a thoughtful mood. One fact, at least, was borne in upon my mind as a result of my visit to Mauly's study—namely, that there is no rest for the wicked!

THE END.

(Next Monday: Our Special Representative interviews Dicky Nugent of the Third Form on "The Fortunes of a Fag." Order early.)

K's for the KNIGHTS who kept Christmas of yore,
And filled pater's mansion with legends galore.

L's for the LOGS which so merrily blaze,
While the guests spin us yarns of their happy young days.

M's for the MISTLETOE, under whose bough
The mater's embracing the curate just now!



Police-Court News at Greyfriars.

With Profuse Apologies to the Daily Papers.

By OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.



AN OLD OFFENDER!

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER, fifteen, of no occupation,

appeared before His Honour Judge Wharton in the Rag on Monday last, charged under the Vagrancy Act with loitering in the Close, and attempting to solicit alms.

Police-constable Johnny Bull, giving evidence, said he watched prisoner from behind the elms in the interval during morning school. A gentleman named Nugent passed by, on his way to the tuck-shop, and Bunter was heard to say something to him about a postal-order.

Magistrate: What were the prisoner's words?

P.-c. Bull: He said, "Lend me five bob, Franky, and I'll pay you back out of my postal-order when it comes."

Magistrate: I've heard of that postal-order before. (Laughter.)

P.-c. Bull: After this incident, your worship, prisoner endeavoured to obtain money from Mr. Field, an Australian tourist.

Magistrate: Did Mr. Field spring the loan, as requested?

P.-c. Bull: No; it's a good many months since he was a new boy. (Laughter.)

The magistrate expressed the opinion that Bunter was incorrigible. He had appeared in that very court dozens of times, charged with a similar offence, and His Honour said that it was time authority asserted itself in no light-handed manner. Prisoner would be sentenced to a severe bumping.

Bunter: It ain't fair!

Magistrate: If you are referring to the weather, I agree with you. It is raining hard. (Laughter.)

Mr. Cherry, the court missionary, said that all attempts to reform Bunter had failed dismally. It was high time other and sterner methods were adopted.

Magistrate: I am in perfect agreement with my learned friend's condemnation of the fat toad who stands before us. Bump him!

The sentence was carried out on the spot.

A VERY VIOLENT PRISONER!

Horace Coker, seventeen, dealer in all sorts of idioey, was called to account for riding a motor-cycle without a rear lamp.

Police-constable Wibley deposed that he was on his beat in Friardale Lane, when a sudden

whirring sound woke him up. He failed to locate the noise, but ultimately came upon prisoner in Uncle Clegg's bun-shop in Court-field, where Coker was at once arrested. His vehicle was deficient of a rear light.

Magistrate (severely): What have you to say?

Prisoner: That you're a silly ass!

One of the Court attendants was here called upon to administer smelling-salts to His Honour, who has seldom been insulted in such a flagrant manner before.

Magistrate (after recovery): I need hardly enlarge upon the peril in which pedestrians are placed through such villainous negligence. You will be sentenced—

At this juncture prisoner struggled violently to liberate himself, but was got under control by Police-sergeant Bolsover.

Magistrate: You will be fined fourpence for failing to show a rear light, and will be severely ragged for contempt of court and assaulting several police officers.

Prisoner: Go to Jericho!

A LORD IN TROUBLE!

The Hon. Herbert Mauleverer, of "Slackerdale," Remove Passage, Greyfriars, was brought up on a charge of flirting on the public highway.

Police-constable Wibley said he saw prisoner in the very act of putting his arm round the waist of a member of the fair sex.

Magistrate: You seem to be having a very busy time of it.

Police-constable Wibley: I'm always game to do my duty, your worship.

Magistrate: Quite right, my dear fellow! Take a penny out of the poor-box.

Lord Mauleverer, who conducted his own defence, swore that he had never, in the whole course of his career, embraced a young lady.

Magistrate: Why is that?

Prisoner: Too much fag, dear boy! (Laughter.)

Magistrate: I resent the term "dear boy" in connection with my honourable self. Do you assert that you were not guilty?

Prisoner: Yaas, dear boy—I mean, your worship!

The magistrate remarked that this was probably a case of mistaken identity, and bound prisoner over to keep the peace for two days. (Loud cheers).

N's for the NUTS which we nibble and crack
In order to have an enjoyable snack.

O's for the ORANGES—if they are bad
We practise bomb-throwing; the target is dad!

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY — OF CERALD LODER.

BULLY, BEAST, AND BRAGGART.

[EDITOR'S NOTE.—The following extracts were handed to us by Loder's fag, Dicky Nugent, who tore them from a punishment-book kept by the rascally prefect. As a sample of spiteful blackguardism they are almost unique.]

MONDAY.—That urchin Nugent failed to wake me at stipulated time. Spanked him severely with slipper and kicked him down-stairs. Hope his back's broken. Tried all day to bowl out Wharton & Co. in some misde-meanour, but they were too fly. Never mind; I'll be even with them yet!

TUESDAY.—Quite a joy-day for me! Gave every Remove kid fifty lines for getting up late, and caught Skinner smoking in his study. I couldn't very well haul him in front of the Head, because he might have let drop one or two nasty hints; so I flogged him soundly instead. Hope he's black and blue, and that he'll smoke on the sly again soon. I love doling out lickings!

WEDNESDAY.—Got the whip-hand of Wharton & Co. at last! They snowballed me in the Close, the young demons, and I rushed off and told the Head. Result, a public flogging all round. My only regret was that Locke laid it on, and not me.

THURSDAY.—Laid into Nugent with a cricket-stump because he poured Brilliantine on my bacon. That lout Wingate came in, attracted by the fag's yells, and called me a bully. The next minute I was lying on the carpet, blinking at myriads of stars. Awful rotter, Wingate! I'll pay him out before long, you bet! Stayed in study all day nursing my chivvy.

FRIDAY.—Made up for lost time. Distributed no less than five thousand lines, and walloped fourteen fags. Visited the Cross Keys, and when I got back several young villains were lying in wait for me by the school wall. They tarred and feathered me—ME, Loder of the Sixth! My hat! I'm at a loss for words! Things are going to hum to-morrow!

SATURDAY.—Found insulting epithets stuck all over the wall of my study. Couldn't unearth the culprit, so flogged every single kid in the Second and Third. Caught young Tubb in the act of making me an apple-pie bed. Pitched him bodily out of the window. He's in the sunny now, racked with lingering tortures. How delicious! Went to the Remove dormitory to see lights out, and found that the little ruffians had erected a booby-trap, with sufficient boots and jugs to kill half-a-dozen people. I, too, am confined to the sunny while I write these lines, but just wait till I get out!

SHOTS AT GOAL.

A Column of Comments Conducted by

H. VERNON-SMITH.

After the Christmas festivities, when we have stowed away the turkey and the plump plum-pudding (who said ginger-pop?), our footer will suffer. We shall see Bulstrode rolling like a barrel between the posts, and the backs, halves, and forwards will be battling, not only against the rival team, but against threatened bilious attacks. However, even M.P.'s slack sometimes, so if we are licked by unlimited goals in our first after-Christmas match, we shall accept the issue with a clear conscience.

During the past week we have fulfilled engagements with both the Fourth and Fifth footer teams. Temple & Co. put up a much better game than usual, and led at half-time by two goals to one; but after the interval we put our beef into it, and succeeded in turning the tables, the final score being 5—3 in our favour. As this is the sixth successive occasion on which we have beaten the Fourth, we may well ask the question: When are Temple & Co. going to play football?

The match with the Fifth revived many amusing recollections of Coker putting the ball through his own goal. For once in a way, however, the great Horace failed to do so, for the simple reason that he wasn't playing! His Form-fellows put up a spirited game, and their backs were a little too hefty for the Remove forward line. However, we contrived to make a draw of it, and were well satisfied with the score—two goals each.

Tom Merry, our friend and rival at St. Jim's, has sent me the following letter:

"Dear Smithy,—In writing to wish you the compliments of the season, I should like to say that we are getting together the hottest side imaginable. You seem to be winning all along the line, and it's high time St. Jim's put its foot down. Look out for the terrific licking in store for you!—Yours ever,
"TOM MERRY."

I can only say that, having wiped up the ground with the St. Jim's fellows on numerous occasions, we are ready, every man juck, to add to our long run of successes—if only Tom Merry will allow sufficient time for the effects of our Christmas dinner to wear off!

Blinker's Reformation!

A Breezy, Long, Complete
School Story, Written for
the "Greyfriars Herald"
by

ROBERT CHERRY

(Our Fighting Editor.)

CHAPTER ONE.

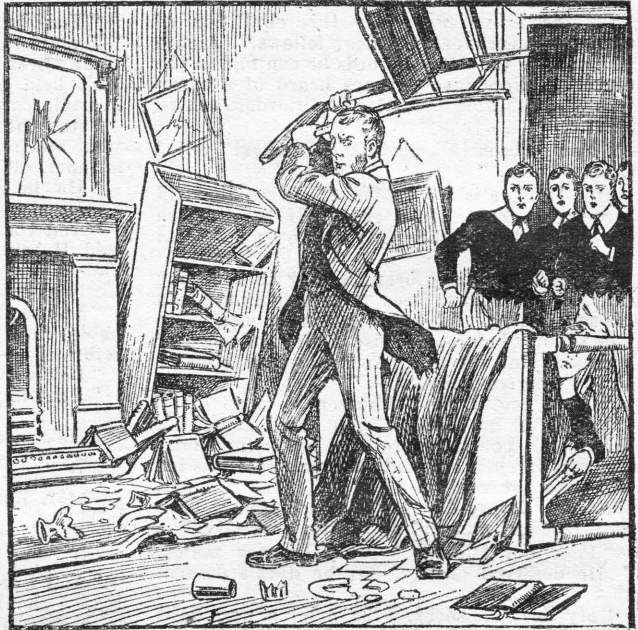
Alonzo Todd's Protege!

SKINNER was a beast!
All the Remove agreed that Skinner was a beast. But we couldn't help laughing, all the same. Skinner was a beast, but it was jolly funny.

Nobody but Skinner would have thought of such a dodge. Certainly nobody but Skinner would have had the nerve to smuggle a bottle of gin into the school. If Skinner had been caught with that bottle of gin, the Head might have supposed that the silly ass meant to scoff it himself, and Skinner would have had short shrift. Of course, Skinner's idea wasn't anything of that kind. He was a beast, but not an idiot.

It was all through Alonzo Todd. Alonzo was born a duffer, and naturally he can't help it. His cousin Peter jaws him no end, but it doesn't make any difference to Alonzo. He just listens, and goes on just the same. He says that his aim is to follow the shining example of his Uncle Benjamin, who is really quite an old sport, and not half such a duffer as Alonzo. Uncle Benjamin is strong on teetotalism, and so is Alonzo. Uncle Benjamin thinks it's wrong, as well as silly, to drink, especially in war time; and, of course, that's all right. But, as chaps in the Remove couldn't be supposed to know the difference between whisky and gin, Lonzzy's eloquence on the subject was really a little superfluous.

There was really no scope for a teetotal reformer at Greyfriars. Before you reform a sinner, you've got to find him. Alonzo thought he had found one, once, when he heard a yarn among the fags about Loder having a bottle of whisky in his study. It turned out to be a bottle of liquid glue, but Alonzo didn't know that, and he went to Loder's study to speak a word in season. Loder was so astonished that Alonzo got out quite an eloquent speech, something about putting an enemy into Loder's



"Where is he?" roared Mr. Blinker. "Where's that narrow-faced nincompoop with 'is tracts? I'll tract 'im! Torkin' to me!" And the wrecking of the study went on right and left!

mouth to steal away Loder's brains; which was all rot, as the enemy would certainly have come away empty-handed in Loder's case! When Loder recovered from his surprise, and realised that a Lower Fourth chap was lecturing him, there was an earthquake. Alonzo never quite knew what happened. He found himself in the passage, with more bumps than he could count, and he was groaning for a long time afterwards.

Alonzo was discouraged, but he was a sticker. He wanted to reform somebody, and there was nobody at Greyfriars wanting reforming, so he looked further. And when he told us about it in the common-room, we yeked.

Alonzo came in looking as chippy as a skylark. He was simply overflowing with the milk of human kindness.

"Hallo!" said Frank Nugent. "Have you come into a fortune, Alonzo?"

"Better than that," said Alonzo.

"Learned how to play footer?"

"My dear Nugent, I have little time to devote to frivolous games. I have succeeded!"

"Been playing the giddy ox again!" growled Peter Todd.

"My dear Peter, I have found a sad sinner!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"And reformed him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd blinked at us in surprise when we all laughed. He never does know what makes fellows laugh when he talks. But they always do.

**Q's for the QUICKNESS of eye which is shown
To see if your brother's share's more than your own!**

"There is no cause for this ebullition of unseemly merriment, my dear fellows." Alonzo always uses the longest words he can find in the dicker. "You have perhaps heard of a somewhat disreputable character in Friardale named Blinker."

"You've been talking to Bill Blinker?" yelled Cousin Peter.

Bill Blinker is the loafer of Friardale, and always screwed. He spends half his time in chokey, and the other half leaning up against the Cross Keys.

"I have not only been talking to him, my dear Peter; I have been reforming him," said Alonzo gently. "I have not mentioned it to you fellows before, because I was not sure of success. But the good work has now been in steady progress for a week."

"Great Scott!" said Wharton.

"I have no doubt you are surprised, Wharton. You were probably labouring under the misapprehension that Blinker's case was too far gone for reform. Happily, that was not the case. Every day for the past week I have seen Blinker, and talked to him earnestly."

"Poor old Blinker!" said Bolsover major. "He deserved chokey, but he didn't deserve that."

"My dear Bolsover, I have let a new light into his mind. I admit at first that he was impatient, and, indeed, rude. But, by making him small loans wherewith to purchase the necessaries of life, I brought him to a gentler frame of mind."

"Is gin a necessary of life?" asked Tom Brown.

"Certainly not, Brown. It is an insidious poison."

"Then what have you been providing Bill Blinker with it for?"

"You misapprehend me, Brown. I gave him money daily to purchase food. I exacted his promise that it should not be expended in drink."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I have also given him clothes, to enable him to assume a somewhat more respectable appearance," said Alonzo. "Otherwise, I fear that the Head would not have approved of my asking him to the school."

"Asking him to which?" yelled Johnny Bull.

"To—to Greyfriars!" stammered Peter.

Alonzo rubbed his hands.

"Certainly, my dear Peter. Blinker's reform being now complete, he has become a quite respectable man, and I wished to show him that, now he is quite respectable, decent persons have no objection to meeting him on account of his sad past. I have therefore asked him to tea in the study."

"Oh, crikey!"

"Oh, Alonzo!"

"Oh, you frabjous ass!"

We all gasped at the idea. It was the outside limit, even for Alonzo Todd. What Dr. Locke would say if he knew, we could hardly guess. We knew it would be something jolly emphatic.

"You burbling jabberwock!" yelled Peter. "The old rascal's only spoofing you. Why, the vicar's been at him for years—he's a stock case. He's held up to the youth of Friardale as a horrible example."

"And the vicar would be jolly ratty if Alonzo went and reformed this horrible example," said Skinner. "'Tain't playing the game!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"My dear Skinner——"

"And the frabjous ass has asked him here!" said Harry Wharton. "Why, the fellow gets violent when he's been drinking, and he's as likely as not to break out and wreck the place."

"In the sad, sad past that was only too probable, my dear Wharton, but since he is reformed——"

"Bow-wow!"

"I desire you fellows to come and see him at tea!"

"He's not coming here, you ass!" roared Peter.

"My dear Peter, he is here already. I have just left him in the study," said Alonzo in his mild way.

"In—in the study?"

"Oh, my hat!"

"And I want some of you fellows to come to tea. I should like you to bring some provisions with you, as I have only a little cash, and I have promised Mr. Blinker another small loan this afternoon."

"You chortling ass!" said Nugent. "Can't you see the smelly beast is only pulling your leg for your money?"

"I should be sorry to entertain such a suspicion of anyone, my dear Nugent. But come and see him."

"Oh, we'll come, rather," chuckled Skinner.

"Better bring a poker or two," said Bulstrode.

"We may need 'em!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

So we followed Alonzo to No. 7 Study. Skinner cut off. We didn't know then what he cut off for. It was only afterwards that we found out that he dodged into Gosling's lodge while old Gossy was at the stables and pinched his bottle of gin. Gosling wasn't supposed to keep gin in his lodge, so he couldn't make a fuss about it; and, of course, that beast Skinner had thought that out.

CHAPTER TWO.

The Arrival and Exit of Blinker!

BLINKER was in the study when we arrived.

He was sitting in the arm-chair, smoking a black pipe. He certainly looked a good deal more respectable than he was usually. He had some clean second-hand clothes on, and he had shaved.

He had his hat on, and his feet on the table. He was looking very dismal. I suppose he thought it hard lines that he should have to tear himself away from the Cross Keys for a couple of hours, just to spoof Alonzo. But, of

**R's for the RICH, who should give of their store,
At this time of the year, to the lowly and poor.**

**S stands for SOLDIERS, abroad and at home;
They all dream of Christmas, wherever they roam.**

course, he couldn't get hold of the duffer's tin without spoofing him.

"My dear friends," said Alonzo, "this is Mr. Blinker."

"Good-afternoon, Blinker!" said Harry Wharton.

"Arternoon!" growled Mr. Blinker.

"My friends have come to tea," said Alonzo. "They are delighted to see you, Mr. Blinker. They have no prejudice against you on account of your sad and reprehensible past."

"Ho!" said Mr. Blinker.

"They would not think of remembering, Mr. Blinker, that they have seen you lolling against the doorpost of the Cross Keys, in a filthy state personally, and under the horrible influence of inebriating liquor."

Blinker looked at Alonzo as if he would eat him.

"And if you would not mind removing your feet, Mr. Blinker, we will proceed to prepare tea."

Mr. Blinker removed his feet.

We got tea.

Some of the fellows thought it a ripping joke, and some were rather worried about what would happen to Alonzo if Mr. Quelch found out that Blinker was there. But it couldn't be helped, and Squiff whispered that we'd better give the man a good tea, and get him to go quietly. Luckily, he was sober just then, and, of course, he couldn't get anything to drink in the school, so we thought it was safe. Of course, we didn't know anything about that beast Skinner's dodge.

Skinner came in to help us. I noticed that he had something under his jacket, and asked him what it was. It wasn't like Skinner to bring a contribution to the feed.

"It's my whack," said Skinner. "I'm helping Alonzo to entertain his friend, same as the rest of you. Sorry I hadn't any grub to bring, Lonzy, but I'm standing the beer."

"Beer!" ejaculated Alonzo. And we all saw Mr. Blinker brighten up.

"Ginger-beer!" explained Skinner. And Alonzo brightened up then, and Mr. Blinker looked dismal again.

Skinner trotted out a big stone bottle.

"That isn't a ginger-beer bottle," said Squiff.

"I've filled it with ginger-beer," said Skinner.

"I thought I'd bring a lot, as Mr. Blinker might be thirsty."

"I ain't thirsty for ginger-beer!" growled Mr. Blinker.

"What would you prefer to drink, my dear Blinker?" asked Alonzo.

Blinker opened his mouth, and shut it again. He wouldn't have got that loan from Alonzo Todd if he had stated what he preferred to drink.

"We have really nice tea," said Alonzo.

Blinker grunted.

"Or lemonade?"

Blinker groaned.

"Or cool, clear, refreshing water!" said Alonzo temptingly.

Blinker shuddered.

"Then what would you prefer, my dear friend?" asked Alonzo, rather at a loss.

"Oh, I ain't thirsty!" said Mr. Blinker. "My thirst 'ave departed from me since I give up booze, Master Todd. I'H 'ave something to heat."

We had collected a good deal of provisions by this time, and Mr. Blinker had a good tea. We all pretended not to notice that he ate with his fingers and knife. That wasn't our business.

He looked round every now and then while he was eating, as if in search of something, but I fancy it wasn't anything to eat that he was in search of. Then he would groan and go on eating again.

Skinner put his big bottle on the table close to him, and drew the cork. If it had been a gin bottle we should have known his game, and stopped him in time. But it was a stone bottle, and we never guessed.

But Blinker did, for his face brightened up wonderfully as he got a sniff from the bottle. Skinner had shoved it fairly under his nose.

"Wot's that?" he exclaimed.

"Ginger-beer!" said Skinner.

"Smells jolly good for ginger-beer," said Mr. Blinker.

"Taste it and try," said Skinner. "It is a harmless beverage, Mr. Blinker, and ever so much better for you than the debasing and degrading intoxicating liquors to which you have so unfortunately been accustomed for many years."

Some of us grinned as we heard Skinner

T's for the jolly old **TURKEY**, of course ;
If father won't **Servia**, you'll have to use force !

U is for **UNCLE**, who tickles our ribs
With tales of his past, which are nearly all fibs !

V is for **VICTORY** over toothache
After mater has forced you to try her iced cake !

mimicking Lonzo's solemn style like that. But Blinker didn't grin. He had taken up the bottle, and put it to his nose, and he looked seraphically happy.

"Might I trouble you for a glass, young gentlemen?" he said. "I rather like this here ginger-beer."

"It cheers, but not inebriates," said Skinner.

Alonzo handed over a tumbler, and Mr. Blinker filled it to the very brim. He sipped at Skinner's ginger-beer, rather suspiciously at first. Then a sort of expansive look came over his face, and he drew a deep breath.

"This 'ere is prime ginger-beer!" he said. "'Ere's to you, Master Todd, and may you always 'ave this 'ere kind of ginger-beer to offer to a bloke what has given up strong drink!"

And he mopped up the whole tumbler.

Alonzo looked at us, and there were tears in his eyes.

"Is not this touching, my friends—" he said. "Observe the joy with which Mr. Blinker imbibes that harmless, refreshing beverage. Can you believe that only a week ago Mr. Blinker was loafing about the Cross Keys, cadging for stray drinks, and in an almost perpetual state of beastly intoxication? Can you believe that this is the man to whom the vicar has talked in vain for twenty years or more. This triumph—this astounding and gratifying triumph—was reserved for me. Oh, Uncle Benjamin, Uncle Benjamin, why are you not here to behold it?"

Crash!

We jumped, as Mr. Blinker's glass went down on the floor and smashed to pieces. A jolly queer change had come over him. The effect of Skinner's ginger-beer was simply marvellous. He wasn't looking dismal now. He was smiling in an idiotic way, and blinking his eyes like anything."

"That's berrer," he murmured. "Now feel a man agen! Gimme some more!"

"My dear fellows," said Alonzo, "look at him—feast your eyes, my dear fellows, upon this unhappy brand snatched from the burning. He asks for more ginger-beer as eagerly as he might have asked for whisky or gin in the bad, sad, old days!"

"Gimme that bottle!" roared Blinker.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! He's getting excited!" said Bob Cherry. "Blessed if I ever saw ginger-beer work like that!"

Mr. Blinker grabbed at the bottle, and knocked it over. He clutched it, and saved it before more than half was spilt. He didn't ask for a glass this time. He began to gurgle at the bottle.

There was a queer, poisonous sort of smell in the study, when the stuff from the bottle swamped over the tablecloth.

The fellows sniffed, and looked at one another queerly.

"My hat!" said Wharton. "That's jolly

queer ginger-beer! It smells like some filthy chemical!"

"Have you been playing tricks with the ginger-pop, Skinner, you tricky rotter?" said Peter Todd.

"I haven't played any tricks with any ginger-pop," said Skinner.

Gurgle—gurgle—gurgle!

Bill Blinker was simply mopping it up. Whatever it was, he seemed to like it. It ran all over his chin and his chest as he mopped it from the bottle, but he didn't seem to mind.

Alonzo Todd gazed at him with a beatific expression. He felt that he had indeed snatched a brand from the burning, when he saw how that confirmed boozer was mopping up ginger-beer. His only regret was that Uncle Benjamin wasn't there to see it.

"I say, that isn't ginger-beer at all," said Squiff, sniffing. "It smells like gin."

"How do you know what gin smells like?" chuckled Skinner.

"I've niffed it in Gosling's lodge," said Squiff; "and that's gin, I'll swear to it."

"And it's Gosling's gin!" roared Bob Cherry all of a sudden. "That's where Skinner dodged off to. Skinner, you beast—"

Skinner scuttled out of the study. He saw that trouble was coming.

We looked at one another in consternation.

Blinker had mopped up enough of Skinner's precious ginger-beer to make a rhinoceros squiffy. Alonzo shook his head gently.

"I am sure Skinner would not play so reprehensible a trick," he said. "Besides, Blinker is reformed. He abhors the taste of spirituous liquor; he has assured me so with his own lips. Had that bottle contained gin, Blinker would have hurled it from him as a thing unclean."

"Fathead!" said Peter.

"My dear Peter—"

Crash!

Blinker's hands were dancing by this time, and the bottle slipped away, and fell to the floor. Blinker stood up, blinking. His legs seemed to curl up, and he grabbed at the table for support.

"My dear friend," exclaimed Alonzo, in distress. "You are ill. Pray allow me to assist you— Yaroooh!"

Swipe!

It was a smack like a pistol-shot, and it sent Alonzo right across the study. He curled up in a corner and stuttered.

"You tork to me!" said Mr. Blinker thickly. "You narrow-faced, squeakin', jabberin' himage, you!"

"Oh, dear!" gasped Alonzo.

"Torkin' to me, old enough to be your grand-father, you cheeky limb, you!" said Mr. Blinker. "A-givin' me tracts! My heye! Come 'ere and I'll lam yer!"

W's for WORK, under Quelchy's stern eye;
So pack up your trunk, and return with a sigh.

"Yow-wow!" moaned Alonzo. "What is the cause of this—this unseemly violence, my dear friend?"

Crash! Mr. Blinker was hanging on to the table, when his legs curled up. He went down on the hearthrug, still hanging on to the table, and naturally he dragged it down with him. Peter Todd yelled; all his crocks were smashing round Blinker on the floor.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Skinner, in the doorway. "Did you chaps ever see a reform like that? Ha, ha, ha!"

Peter Todd picked up the loaf, and got a wicket with it, and Skinner left off cackling as he rolled along the passage.

Mr. Blinker sat up among the crocks.

"I been 'saulted!" he gasped. "I been 'saulted and battered. Lemme gerrat 'im! Arskin' a gentleman to tea and 'saultin' and battin' of him! Lemme lay 'old of 'im!"

"For goodness' sake be quiet!" said Wharton. "Here, let's show you out!"

"I ain't goin' out!" roared Mr. Blinker. "I'm 'ere, and 'ere I sticks, landlord or no landlord! Don't talk to me about early closing!"

The squiffy beast thought he was at the Cross Keys by that time, and he was ripe for a shindy. He trampled round on the crocks, and there wasn't much left of them but powder. He kicked the table away, and fell over a chair. That seemed to excite his temper, for he picked up the chair and hurled it at the looking-glass over the mantelpiece. The smash could have been heard at the other end of the Remove passage.

"Clear off, for goodness' sake!" shouted Nugent. "Get out of the study!"

We grabbed Alonzo, and dragged him out. We were glad to get outside. Blinker was fairly on the warpath now, and he was brandishing the chair, and wrecking the study right and left.

"Where is he?" he roared. "Where's that narrow-faced nincompoop, with 'is tracts? I'll tract 'im! Torkin' to me!"

"Get out, you beast!" shouted Squiff.

"I ain't going out without I'm put out!" said Mr. Blinker. "Call your stable'ands if you like, Mr. Cobb. Don't talk to me about early closing! Blow the new Act! You lay 'ands on me! Grrrrr!"

Crash! Crash! Crash!

"Oh, dear!" mumbled Alonzo. "My dear fellows, I fear that the reform has not gone very deep. I fear that he is unregenerate. I

have a very severe pain in my nose. Yow-ow!"

Crash! Bash! Smash!

"In Heaven's name, what is the matter?" shouted Mr. Quelch, buzzing along the passage. He had heard the rumpus. "What has happened? Why—Who—who is this man? what—what—Bless my soul! Wingate—Courtney—Loder, call Gosling—call Mr. Mibble! Bless my soul!"

What came next was simply the limit. Gosling, the porter, and Mibble, the gardener, and John, the coachman, and Wingate and Courtney of the Sixth, had all they could do to collar Mr. Blinker and carry him out. But they did it at least, and they left him in the road, raging.

Then Quelch inquired who had brought him into Greyfriars. And then—well, it was a long time before Alonzo Todd forgot what happened next. He certainly couldn't sit down in the Form-room the next day. And he quite gave up snatching brands from the burning. He let 'em burn after that.

It was lucky for Skinner that it didn't come out about the gin. But as Alonzo had had a licking, we thought it only fair that Skinner should have one, so we gave him one, and it was a jolly good one. As for Blinker, he is still the vicar's horrible example; and Alonzo would as soon try to reform the Kaiser as Blinker now.

THE END.

(Continued from page 5).

In view of the amazing popularity of the competition, I have decided to award twelve magnificent Tuck Hampers, instead of six, as previously stated. They will be awarded to the following, each of whom had only one error:

H. T. Stephenson, 50, Rochester Avenue, Rochester; Lucy M. Milgate, 12, Basnett Road, Lavender Hill, S.W.; A. E. Tyler, Glenville, Stoneyford Road, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts; J. Smith, 3, Pendragon Lane, Bradford, Yorks; J. P. Blain, 67, Mansel Street, Swansea, South Wales; F. C. Hazell, 25, Grove Road, North Finchley, N.; J. Mills, 34, Dalry Street, Blackheath, near Birmingham; B. Leggett, 21, Charteris Road, Finsbury Park, N.; J. Petty, 2, Player Street, Ryde, Isle of Wight; Mollie Neilson, Glen, 55, Cumberland Street West, Glasgow; and Len Barker, 46, Panton Road, Hoole, Chester.

Another of our great Picture Puzzle contests appears in this number.

X is for XERXES—I don't know which sex—
It's the only old fossor to fit letter "X."

Y is for YULETIDE: so be of good cheer;
Let's hope "Peace on earth" is established next year.

Z is for ZIG-ZAG—that's just how you feel
After sampling with relish a Christmas Eve meal!

FROM PLOUGH-BOY TO PRIME MINISTER.

Or, THE DOWNWARD PATH.

By S. Q. I. FIELD, Our Special Tame Humorist.

CHAPTER ONE. The Road to Ruin!

GEORGE HENRY began life as a plough-boy, and so did his brother Tom. Their occupations were the same, but their natures, alas! were quite different.

While Tom was content to plough a straight furrow, to do his duty, and to lead a simple and honest life, George Henry's wayward fancy wandered far beyond the limits of the farmer's fields. Afar on the horizon he would watch the smoke of the great city, and long to take his place in the busy haunts of men, amid the smoke, the clatter, the roar of the motor-buses, and the taxi-cab accidents. And one day George Henry turned his back upon the farm where his early years had been spent, and turned it, alas! upon the simple and upright teaching of his innocent childhood.

His brother Tom went on ploughing straight furrows. But George Henry never did anything straight. Reader, take the lesson to heart! This story is written with a high purpose. If the fate of George Henry, as here related, should save one reader from the downward path, we are content.

In a worldly sense, George Henry prospered. He became a captain of industry. Nothing could exceed his skill in promoting companies, excepting his wonderful gift for getting out of them just before they failed. His wealth increased. With every bankruptcy he added to his already swollen fortune.

By this time he was hardened, and the dim memories of the simple farm had faded from his mind, and he turned to politics. From bad to worse is an easy step. Beware, my young friends, of the first step upon the downward path!

In the simple old home Tom went on ploughing straight furrows. The name of George Henry reached him sometimes, in the newspapers, and on the hoardings in the election-posters. Sometimes he shed bitter tears. But he cherished a hope that some day his erring brother would repent.

Did George Henry repent?

Alas, he showed no sign! From a common-or-garden Member he became a Secretary of State. George Henry was a Member of the Cabinet.

When the good Tom heard the news he turned his face to the wall, and never smiled again.

CHAPTER TWO. Too Late!

HEEDLESS of the anguish his conduct caused in the simple old home, George Henry pursued his reckless path.

He became Prime Minister.

Reader, let us pause here to shed a tear for George Henry. His fate might have been so different. Had he been content with the simple surroundings of his early years, had he but reflected in time, he would never have sunk to this. His heart was naturally good; he had been an affectionate child. He had shown promise in his earliest years. Let us not judge him too severely, dear reader. Let us pass lightly over this painful period in his career.

One day a fancy came into George Henry's mind to see, once more, his old home. His two-thousand-guinea car bore him down to the quiet shades of the simple country. He walked under the old trees, he gazed upon the old fields, where once, by the side of his good brother, he had ploughed straight furrows. What—ah, what had he done since then? Tears rose in his eyes as he thought of it.

With a trembling hand he knocked at the old cottage door. What would the good Tom say when he saw him? Would he spurn him forth, as he felt only too keenly he deserved?

Or would he forgive him, and take the repentant prodigal to his bosom?

There was a strange hush in the cottage.

"Tom!" said George Henry, with a sob.

"Hush!" said a voice. "You come too late! Tom heard the news; he learned what you had become, and it broke his heart!"

George Henry staggered blindly from the cottage. His heart was full!

In the darkening fields George Henry leaned heavily upon the old stile, with the tears running down his cheeks.

Repentance had come too late! The good Tom's heart was broken! He had seen the news in the paper, he knew that George Henry had reached the Premiership, and from that moment he had uttered no word. Then— But why dwell upon a painful story?

George Henry gazed over the darkening fields, and sobbed.

"Too late!" he muttered. "Too late! If only I had been warned in time!"

And George Henry covered his face with his hands, and wept bitterly!

THE END.